

## B. OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION & RECREATION ELEMENT

### INTRODUCTION

The Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element provides a description of the lands and water that are unimproved and are to be devoted to natural uses through General Plan land use designations, and a description of existing and planned recreation sites and facilities. Open Space, Conservation and Recreation are combined in one element because the topics they cover are closely related.

The Open Space and Conservation Elements are mandatory elements of the General Plan (they must be included). The Recreation Element is an optional element. Including it in the City's General Plan reflects the importance of parks and recreational facilities and programs to the City of Rocklin. It also establishes park standards that provide the basis for requiring new development to dedicate park lands or pay fees toward acquisition and development of new parks.

The Conservation Element addresses the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources. Conservation of water resources, heritage trees, soils and geologic features, creeks and riparian habitat, plants and wildlife, flood protection, energy, air quality, minerals and cultural resources is relevant to the Rocklin planning area and included in this Element. The goals and policies for this Element reflect an increased emphasis on protection of valued natural resources as the community continues to develop, and provide specific direction as to how that protection should occur. Policy OCR-6 of this Element makes specific reference to the role the City should take with regard to the Placer Legacy program. Placer Legacy is a voluntary County program that has as its purpose the protection of the County's open space and agricultural resources.

The Open Space Element is intended to guide the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of "open space land," which is defined in State law as any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to open space use. The Open Space Element must address the following topics to the extent that they are locally relevant:

- Open space for the preservation of natural resources
- Open space for the managed production of resources
- Open space for outdoor recreation
- Open space for public health and safety
- Demands for trail-oriented recreational use
- Retention of all publicly-owned City and County trail routes with appropriate segments of the California Recreational Trails System

Planning for the preservation of the natural environment and the development and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities enhances the quality of life in a community. Providing open space area benefits the environment through the preservation of critical lands, combating air

pollution, and attenuating noise. The local community also benefits from the recreational and educational opportunities that parks and open spaces provide. Finally, natural areas and parks can help to shape urban growth in a community and bolster local economics by increasing property values.

The City has taken a leading role in preserving open space corridors and other natural features in newly developing areas. This approach is reflected in the open space goals and policies, which in turn reflect the high interest expressed by Rocklin residents in the community survey in preserving remaining areas for open space and outdoor recreation. The survey showed that Rocklin residents value open space, park and recreation facilities, and the natural amenities of the community. Construction of streets, schools and parks, protecting creeks and waterways, preserving open space, and providing recreational programs and facilities were all ranked as “very important” in the survey. Connectivity of habitat and open space areas is another important issue that is addressed in the General Plan policies related to the preservation of open space for natural resources. In addition to traditional parks, Rocklin contains areas of open space that are rugged and undeveloped. Linear green space along creeks and other corridors is encouraged, while recognizing that issues related to maintenance, security and access must also be addressed. Linear open space areas can also be multi-purpose, including bicycle and pedestrian paths.

This Element establishes a standard for developing 5 acres of parkland for each 1,000 residents. It also establishes park location guidelines and park standards, which are intended to set forth City requirements for future park and recreational facilities.

Cultural resources (archaeological and historical) are also addressed in this Element. The City of Rocklin has a proud past, as described briefly in the section that follows. Identifying and protecting the community’s cultural and historic resources benefits those who will follow in future generations by protecting a sense of history and ensuring that an historic perspective is retained. Such activities also benefit those who live in the City today by providing a longer-term perspective that may encourage balance in making planning decisions for the type of community to be created through the ongoing development process. This Element includes policies that encourage recognition of historic structures and a stronger recognition of the City’s history.

This Element also recognizes the unique role of mineral resources in the City of Rocklin, both in the past and in the present day, as evidenced by the presence of granite quarries in the community. Although only one quarry remains active, the former quarry sites help shape the physical form and appearance of Rocklin.

In addition to the goals and policies, the Open Space Diagram is a part of the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element. In the Rocklin General Plan, the Land Use Diagram (found in the pocket inside the back cover of this document) encompasses the Open Space Diagram.

## DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section provides a description of the lands and waterways in the planning area that are unimproved. This section addresses the natural resources of the planning area, including natural habitats, vegetation and wildlife, soils, and mineral resources. Cultural resources and parks and recreation are also described in this section.

### MAJOR WATER COURSES

In 1972 the U.S. Congress enacted the Clean Water Act to maintain and restore the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the United States. Water bodies, water ways and wetlands are protected under the Clean Water Act, which gives authority to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to regulate activities that could discharge fill or dredged material into the waters of the United States. Under the Clean Water Act, wetlands are defined as areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas (*Wetlands Delineation Manual*, Corps of Engineers, 1987).

The City of Rocklin contains a variety of water-oriented sites including creeks, abandoned granite quarries, ponds, riparian forested wetlands, and seasonal wetlands. Antelope Creek, Secret Ravine Creek and Sucker Creek are perennial streams that provide riparian habitat for a variety of animals. Pleasant Grove Creek and Clover Valley Creek are also significant streams in the community. Other ephemeral streams exist during the rainy season. Seasonal wetlands in the Rocklin area commonly occur within the grassland habitat areas. Vernal pools are seasonal depression wetlands that are covered by shallow water for variable periods from winter to spring. The water-oriented environments found within Rocklin provide important resources to a wide variety of species. A map of major water courses, creeks and drainages is included as Figure 4-3.

### VEGETATION/WILDLIFE

The City of Rocklin planning area supports a variety of habitat types with numerous plant and wildlife species. The predominant habitats included within the City limits are urban, annual grassland, and oak woodlands. Riparian and streamside habitats and seasonal wetlands also provide important habitats. These habitats are generally described as follows:

**Urban:** Common species of mature trees, shrubs and herbaceous vegetation are associated with urban areas. Typically, the plants integrated into landscape designs are non-native species, although many native oaks have been integrated into landscapes throughout the City of Rocklin. The habitat value of these areas has been altered by the development of residential and commercial structures, roadways and other urban facilities. Common wildlife species occurring in the urban areas of Rocklin include: lesser goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*), scrub jay (*Aphelocoma caerulescens*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), western gray squirrel (*Sciurus*

*griseus*), opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), and a variety of small rodents.

**Annual Grasslands:** Annual grassland habitats support relatively low plant diversity, and are commonly dominated by wild oats, soft chess, and brome. Non-native species have invaded much of the grasslands in California, and only scattered islands of native grasslands continue to exist. The dominant plants in the planning area are introduced species that have largely replaced native species due to intentional and unintentional introduction, changes in grazing pressures and fire abatement practices. Common bird species supported by annual grasslands in the Rocklin area include: western meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*), western kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) and Brewer's blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). Predatory birds such as white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), burrowing owl (*Athene cuniculari*), and great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*) are typical of annual grasslands in the Rocklin area.

**Seasonal Wetlands:** Seasonal wetlands in the Rocklin planning area are characterized by vernal pools that form in some areas during the rainy season in shallow hardpan depressions. A variety of distinctive plant species flourish along the margins of these pools as water recedes in the spring. A number of brackish, alkaline springs, known as salt seeps, exist within these grassland areas. During the dry season, wildlife in these areas is similar to that described for annual grassland habitats. However, when these pools fill with water, they provide habitat for aquatic invertebrates, including a variety of insect larvae, and breeding sites for amphibians such as the pacific tree-frog (*Hyla regilla*) and the western toad (*Bufo boreas*).

**Riparian and Streamside Habitats:** These habitats occur along the creeks, drainages, and adjacent to ponds and marshy areas throughout the Rocklin planning area, and support a variety of vegetation including various willow species, Himalayan blackberry, California buckeye, Valley oaks, Fremont's cottonwood and coyote brush. These habitats are an important resource in the life cycle of many vertebrate species and can be expected to support a higher density of birds and mammals. Typical riparian species include wood duck (*Aix sponsa*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), belted kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), and raccoon (*Procyon lotor*).

**Oak Savannah/Oak-Foothill Woodlands:** Oak savannah habitats in the Rocklin planning area are dominated by blue oaks, valley oaks, and live oak species, and underlain with herbaceous annual species found in the annual grassland communities. Associations of predominately blue oak and digger pines are typical of oak-foothill woodland habitats. Typical bird species found in these habitats include: western kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*), Brewer's blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), mourning dove (*Zenaidura macroura*), turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), acorn woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), western scrub-jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*), yellow-rumped warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), and American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*). Other species typical of this habitat include: black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus columbianus*), western gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*), arboreal salamander (*Aneides lugubris*), California newt (*Taricha torosa*), southern alligator lizard

(*Gerrhonotus multicarinatus*), Gilbert's skink (*Eumecis gilberti*), raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), coyote (*Canis latrans*) and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*).

## WILDLIFE

### Special-Status Species

Special-status species are those species that have been designated by federal, state, or local agencies for special recognition. Listed and special-status species are defined as:

- Listed as rare, threatened, or endangered by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
- Listed by CDFG as Species of Special Concern;
- Protected under local regulations and policies.

### Federal Endangered Species Act/California Endangered Species Act

The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) was enacted in 1973 in order to provide a means of conserving endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems that support those species. In 1984, California enacted a similar law, the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). These acts work in conjunction with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to conserve the ecosystems upon which threatened and endangered species depend. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is responsible for implementing FESA; the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) has authority over CESA.

### Species of Special Concern

The CDFG maintains a list of species of special concern that receive additional consideration. Species of special concern are not protected under FESA or CESA, but are species whose numbers are declining at a rate that could lead to listing, or have historically occurred in low numbers and there are known threats to their continued existence.

### Listed Special Status Species

The California Department of Fish and Game maintains the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), an inventory of the location and condition of California's rare, threatened, endangered, and sensitive plants, animals, and natural communities. On January 18, 2002 a search of the CNDDDB was performed for the Rocklin and Roseville 7.5 USGS Quadrangles. A list of special-status species is also maintained by the USFWS, and was searched by USFWS on January 23, 2002 for the Rocklin and Roseville 7.5 USGS Quadrangles. Appendix B includes a list of special status species potentially occurring in the Rocklin planning area based upon the CNDDDB and USFWS searches, and previous biological studies in the planning area.

## Local Regulations and Policies

In addition to several General Plan policies related to special status species, the City of Rocklin maintains an Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance regulating the protection and preservation of oak trees along with mitigation measures for trees allowed to be removed. The ordinance applies to oaks with a trunk diameter at breast height of six inches or more. Prior to removal of any native oak, an application must be submitted for an Oak Tree Removal Permit. A certified arborist report may be required prior to removal. Mitigation for removal may include replacement on a one-to-one basis or greater ratio based on the diameter of the tree removed, or payment into the City's Oak Tree Preservation Fund. On finished single family residential lots, oak trees can be removed with mitigation measures established in the ordinance to allow the owner to build on the lot. On developed multifamily, commercial and industrial lots, oak trees can be removed without mitigation only if dead or diseased. On property proposed for development, preservation and removal of healthy oak trees is addressed during the development application review process.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Rocklin planning area has a rich history, and the value of the area's cultural and historical resources is recognized in the General Plan. The following discussion is based on information collected by Peak and Associates for the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element.

### Prehistory

Until recent years, few archeological studies have been conducted in the planning area region. Early excavations had focused either on the large, rich village sites in the Delta region and along the major waterways in the Central Valley or on the higher elevation sites in proposed reservoir areas, along major Sierran waterways. In general, research first established the chronological sequences for each region, with later work emphasizing refinement of these sequences.

Increasing urbanization in the Sacramento region over the past twenty years has pushed development further from the major drainages and into the margin of the Sacramento Valley and the Sierran foothills. There is no established archeological sequence for the region, but the cultural ties seem to be stronger to the Sierra Nevada.

The City of Rocklin is located between three areas with defined archeological sequences: the Oroville locality to the north, the Central Sierra area to the east and the Central Valley/Delta area to the west. These sequences include many similar artifact types and dates for major cultural changes, but there are also significant differences between them. It is not clear at present which of these sequences best reflects the prehistory of the City of Rocklin, or if a separate local sequence is necessary to adequately describe the area.

An excavation project by Chavez (1982) on sites on Linda Creek and Strap Ravine corroborated the findings of earlier work that indicated that the strong Central Valley association characteristic of the late prehistoric cultures in the foothill area might not extend to earlier cultures in the Rocklin

vicinity. Although there are many similarities with the material culture of the Late Horizon of the Central Valley, there are also significant points of diversion.

It is clear that the most recent prehistoric cultures of the area reflect, in general, the late cultures of the Central Valley, though there are interesting local variations. Some of the differences clearly result from the greater wealth and population in the valley, but other differences may reflect a technological response to differing ecological settings and resource exploitation techniques.

In the preceding phase of prehistory there is a consistent expression of high Sierra Nevada and Great Basin relationships of some sort. However, the projectile points that reflect this connection are often produced on material imported from the Coast Ranges, although manufacturing on locally available non-obsidian materials is much more common. The reasons for this situation are not clear. This could also be a response to differing ecological settings, but the relationship between foothill sites and the Martis Culture proper is an open question.

Sites in the planning area that contain prehistoric resources most commonly occur along drainages, on flat ridges and terraces, and in areas that contain oak woodlands with rock outcrops (Rocklin Civic Center Plan DEIR, L-9). Common prehistoric resources found in the area are bedrock mortars. Typically, mortars do not represent a unique occurrence and are not considered significant resources due to lack of research potential (Granite Lakes Estates DEIR, O-7). Other prehistoric resources found in the area include lithic scatter, fire-fractured rock, ground stone fragments, basalt flakes, and midden deposits (Sunset West DEIR, U-3; Granite Lakes Estates DEIR, O-8; Clover Valley Lakes federal Section 106 draft management plan).

### Ethnology

At the time of the Gold Rush, the planning area was occupied by the Nisenan Indians, identified by the language they spoke. There have been several general treatments of the Nisenan culture by Beals 1933; Kroeber 1929, 1953; Littlejohn 1928; Wilson and Towne 1978; and Wilson 1982. There are also several articles on various aspects of their culture as reported in the bibliography and elsewhere. The following discussion relies extensively on text by Norman Wilson, and where not cited, is derived from Wilson and Towne 1978 and Wilson 1982.

The Nisenan peoples occupied the drainages of the Yuba, Bear, and the American Rivers from the Sacramento River on the west to the summit of the Sierra in the east. The Foothill and Hill Nisenan peoples were distinctive from the Valley Nisenan and were loosely organized into tribelets or districts with large central villages, surrounded by smaller villages. These are often referred to as winter villages by older Indians. These central villages and their leaders seemed to have had power or control over the surrounding smaller villages and camps and specific surrounding territory (Beals 1933; Littlejohn 1928; Wilson and Towne 1978). These districts were oriented to natural resources and land forms. In the foothills and mountains the major drainages became formal or informal boundaries with the land in between forming the district. Thus, the Placerville District is between the Cosumnes River and the Middle Fork of the American River, the Auburn District between the Middle Fork of the American River and the Bear River, and the Nevada City District between the Bear River and the Yuba River.

The Nisenan depended on activities attuned to the seasonal ripening of plant foods, the seasonal movements and migration of the animals, and the runs of fish. With the flooding of the valley in the winter and spring a great number of animals such as elk, antelope and bears moved to the natural levees along the rivers and up into the lower foothills. Along the foothill margins they joined the resident and migratory deer herds. Huge flocks of waterfowl visited the flooded areas between the rivers and the foothills, coveys of quail gathered in the fall, and pigeons were common in the fall and spring. Steelhead and salmon ran up most of the major streams, including Secret Ravine, in the fall, winter and spring. The hunting of these plentiful resources was part of the foothill way of life. This same bounty was available to the river-oriented valley peoples out on the valley floor and along the natural levees of the rivers.

There were major north-south Indian trails along the margin of the foothills that were usable year around as well as other trails east and west along the natural levees of the stream courses. There was probably not a great deal of competition for resources at this time except in lean years. Both the valley and foothill peoples lived at the edges of rich ecotones: the rivers and the valley floor; and the valley floor and the foothills.

While the Hill Nisenan to the east in the foothills carried on trade with the valley peoples and shared some of the cultural traits, their culture lacked the complexity and richness of the Valley Nisenan. The Hill Nisenan had a different resource base to work with, which required greater mobility and more intense use of the available resources (Matson 1972). They developed a local culture that was more closely oriented to the gathering, storage and year-round use of the acorn, continual foraging of resources by everyone in the village group, specialized hunting strategies and availability of different plants to gather and process (Erskian and Ritter 1972). They depended on activities attuned to the seasonal ripening of plant foods and the seasonal migrations and increased populations of animals and insects. The foothill people relied more on foraging for food, for immediate use or short-term storage, rather than gathering for future needs. As a result, they had to be much more mobile in their use of the land and its resources. Lower population densities and the large number of campsites reflect the more limited ability to acquire and utilize the fewer available resources.

This continual movement meant the foothill people did not have large year-round villages. There are no known major villages in the foothills or mountains that can compare with the valley permanent village sites or population densities. Instead, there are hundreds of small campsites and villages scattered across the foothills and mountains and specific localities have been identified as the centers for gathering of these hill peoples. One of these villages in the City of Rocklin can be identified as "*Ba ka cha*," apparently occupied at the time of contact. The location of this site correlates with the recorded location of a prehistoric site in the southeastern section of the City.

It appears that the hill people were more socially organized around the extended family than the village, and would often camp in informal family groups around the central village. Since they did some foraging and extensive fishing and hunting in the winter they needed to have some access to a resource base at all times. However, due to the ability to store acorns and other dried foods and take advantage of the winter concentrations of game, birds and fish, they could congregate in larger villages in the wintertime. There is some evidence that these winter villages were relocated at times if the local resources were largely depleted. Over a long period of time, a center village may have been abandoned and moved and then reoccupied at a later time. Many place names refer to these old or unoccupied sites.

At the central villages there was the need to build and maintain more substantial houses for winter living. Larger family houses, a dance house and acorn granaries were part of these winter quarters. The availability of firewood may also have been a factor in the preference for living up in the oak woodlands of the foothills. Winter was the time of ceremonies, social gatherings and marriages. Shamans had contests, children were trained, and trade items, tools, baskets and equipment were made and repaired.

The introduction of malaria to central California *circa* 1831 occurred as a result of expeditions of several fur brigades of the Hudson's Bay Company with infected individuals. The introduction of the disease led to the tremendous epidemic of 1833 that decimated the Indian population of the region. It is estimated that three-quarters of the total Indian population of the region died from the disease in that year. The impacts of malaria played a major role in defining the post-Contact land use pattern of the Indians of the region, as well as impacting Euro-American economic development.

### Gold Rush and Beyond

Malaria remained endemic in the region in the mining camps of the Sierran foothills, with frequent sharp local outbreaks throughout the Central Valley until about 1880. The Third Biennial Report of the State Board of Health published in 1875 referenced an undated article from *The Placer Press* that reported, "Almost everybody living west of Gold Hill is either down with fever, or chills and fever, or more or less affected by the miasmatic poison generated and floating around in that locale" (Gray and Fontaine 1951:27).

Secret Ravine was the site of extensive placer mining in the 1850s and 1860s in the vicinity of Newcastle, and also to the south around Stewarts Flat. Pine Grove, later Pino, was the center of ravine diggings at that time (Gudde 1975:276). Pino is located at the modern location of the Town of Loomis.

The Central Pacific Railroad arrived in Rocklin in May of 1864, making Rocklin an important transportation center. It appears the name "Rocklin" was a corruption of Rock Land, because of the extensive rock outcroppings in the area and the granite quarrying beginning to take place. It has also been reported that the Finnish people changed the name to Rocklin, since the Finnish write the name as Rocklissa or "in Rocklin" and "Rocklin" as Rockland (History of Rocklin California, Roy Ruhkala, 1974).

A major locomotive terminal was established in Rocklin in 1866 because of its location at the “bottom of the hill”. It served as the railroad’s roundhouse until 1908 when it moved to Roseville. Trains were cut into two sections at Rocklin in order to ascend the grade of the Sierra Nevada (California Department of Parks and Recreation 1990). The first shipment from Rocklin consisted of three carloads of granite.

Rocklin became the principal granite-producing point in the Sacramento Valley. The first quarry opened in 1863, and the stone was used in construction work on the Central Pacific for culverts. The Rocklin quarries were comparatively close together, occurring in an area less than a mile square on a gently rolling plain that borders the railroad.

By 1904, there were at least fifteen quarries in operation and several others idle. Most of the quarries were small, employing from three to ten men. The largest quarry employed 33 men, and at times, as many as 50. Most of the smaller quarries were operated by immigrant Finns, Russians, and Italians. Each of the quarries had a railway spur connecting with the Southern Pacific Railroad at Rocklin (Aubury, 1906:38-40).

Chinese workers had been brought in to work on the construction of the railroad after the Central Pacific had completed 40 miles and federal funding became available. At that point the rail had reached a point about four miles east of Auburn. The Rocklin-Roseville Chinatown was reportedly situated between the communities of Rocklin and Roseville. Other reports indicate that Chinatown was located behind and northeast of the roundhouse. On September 16, 1877, the Chinese living in the community were forced to leave, and their buildings were destroyed after an incident in which three non-Chinese were killed by a Chinese individual (McDannold 2000:166).

Although gold mining and quarrying remained important industries in Placer County, the value of the land for cultivation was recognized very early. A variety of grains were experimented with including wheat, oats, barley, and hay, and vineyards were planted in the valley and foothills.

The commercial fruit industry expanded rapidly in western Placer County in the late 1870s and early 1880s, with the Central Pacific providing a wide market in the east for California's agricultural products. A wide variety of fruits and nuts were raised, including citrus, apples, peaches, pears, plums, cherries, olives, almonds, and walnuts (Lardner and Brock 1924:228-237). Chinese laborers were reportedly used in the agricultural fields because they seemed to endure the malaria, while the white laborers did not. In 1894, Japanese laborers began to move into the region, eventually providing virtually all of the fruit orchard labor.

The City of Rocklin was incorporated in 1893, with a population of approximately 550.

### Western Rocklin/Spring Valley Ranch

The Whitney family played an important role in the development of western Placer County. Much of the western part of Rocklin is a portion of the vast Spring Valley Ranch of over 20,000 acres accumulated and held by the Whitney family, from the late 1850s until 1949 (Miller 1969).

George Whitney, the patriarch of the clan, was a seventh generation New Englander, from a family of farmers. He attended Harvard and chose a life of business enterprise rather than following the occupation of his forbears. George had six sons, George O., William J., Charles, Francis, Joel Parker, and James G., all of whom but the youngest were trained in the mercantile business. The family home was located in Gardner, Massachusetts, and the family traveled extensively throughout the eastern states for both business and sporting expeditions.

After hearing of the discovery of gold in California, the elder Whitney brothers traveled overland to the gold country. They chose to set up a mercantile business in San Francisco rather than try to become rich through mining. Three years later, Joel Parker also came to California and took up mining, then commercial game hunting, and eventually joined his brothers in the mercantile business. He set up an independent shipping business, making at least eight transcontinental trips by way of the Isthmus of Panama in the succeeding seven years.

During one of his return trips, George Whitney decided to visit his sons in California. He noted that there was an increasing need for mutton and wool. Most of the sheep in California at the time were from Texas, small in size with wool that was light and of an inferior quality. Since much of the imported wool at the time came from Australia, the Whitneys decided that it might be profitable to import Spanish Merino sheep from Australia to cross with Saxony rams from the east. General Hollister, an acquaintance of the Whitneys and a major sheep grower in San Benito County, was able to provide the family with some of his Saxony stock brought from Vermont. By 1856 the sheep importation from Australia had been started with the purchase of 400 ewes. Of this initial shipment, about 120 survived the long voyage. The flock was taken to Placer County and placed on the open range with a herder.

The senior George Whitney initially purchased a half section of land for sheepraising headquarters near what would become Rocklin. The 320-acre parcel was surrounded by thousands of unoccupied acres and open land. Because the crossbred sheep were extremely prolific, there was a need for new land within a few years. The Whitneys began acquiring all of the adjacent parcels as soon as finances permitted. All of the brothers had some interest in the business; the father and brothers would regularly travel from San Francisco to the ranch to check on the flock and bring supplies for the herder. By the time the senior Whitney died in 1873, J. Parker Whitney had acquired control of the range and had 15,000 head of sheep.

J. Parker Whitney traveled extensively and had business interests in Colorado, New Mexico, and other parts of California. He built his family home near Rocklin on the lands acquired for the sheep business. His home site, known as the Spring Valley Ranch, included at least twenty buildings. Further improving his ranch in 1871, Whitney built major engineering works to provide a better water supply for the ranch. The water system allowed him to plant orchards and vineyards near the headquarters of the ranch in Spring Valley. After 1875 Whitney began to cultivate all of the available grain land on the ranch. Since the cultivation of grains required vast tracts of land in order to turn a profit, it is not surprising that Whitney dedicated 8,000 acres of his ranch to this production. Spread throughout the remainder of the vast acreage of the ranch lands were 11 sets of farm buildings, each of which usually included a small house with a few utility buildings and a barn for various farm animals (Miller 1969:159-167).

To connect the different buildings on the ranch complex, Whitney constructed over twenty-five miles of roads. These roads were approximately twenty-five feet wide and well crowned, with a slope of about two feet from the center of the road down to ditches on either side. The roads were surfaced with decomposed granite quarried from a pit on the ranch. Twelve granite bridges crossed the creeks on the main road from Rocklin to the headquarters. This road continued from the ranch headquarters through the vineyard near the main house and around the back of the ranch (Miller 1969: 181).

Whitney maintained the roads with three horse-drawn graders. The largest was a huge iron and oak grader that required three men and a team of four heavy horses for operation. He also had a small, light iron and oak grader that required only two men to operate. The final horse-drawn grader, purchased around 1900, was a small, light iron-wheel grader that could be drawn by a team of light horses but still required two men for operation. These graders had been abandoned in the ranch dump by 1939 (Miller 1969: 181).

J. Parker Whitney initiated the development of an agricultural area named "English Colony" at Loomis in 1889, with 2,000 to 3,000 acres subdivided for colonists from England. Whitney and others tried to establish an English countryside in the Placer County foothills between Loomis and Newcastle, building fine homes and establishing a country club. Malaria, combined with the financial depression of 1893 to 1897, ruined the colony. The wealth of many of the colonists might have weathered the depression, but they could not withstand the disease. After the demise of the colony, the orchards became full bearing and very profitable, worked by Asian labor forces.

J.P. Whitney retained control of the ranch until his death in 1913. His son Parker Whitney continued management at the ranch until his death eleven years later. During the subsequent years, the heirs sold off the ranch in large parcels, with the final sale in 1946 containing the old mansion (*Sacramento Bee*, October 23, 1958).

The seasonal drying of the grasslands, resulting in a loss of a pasture land for livestock herds, led pioneer ranchers to use higher elevation grasslands for summer and fall grazing. The ranchers could find ample grasslands in the mountain regions, and could move the herds of cattle and sheep in May to graze on the vast acreages of unclaimed land at the higher elevations until the late fall. The herds had to be moved to lower elevations prior to the first snowstorms that marked the onset of winter. At lower elevations in the area of concern, the fall rains would bring the regeneration of the grasses at the home ranch, allowing return of the herds for the winter and spring. This pattern of seasonal transhumance, as ancient as domestic livestock raising itself, is found throughout the world among cattle and sheep raising peoples; it was a practice that would have been familiar to immigrants from many different areas of Europe, Latin America, and the eastern United States (Jordan 1993).

Without a large herd of cattle or sheep, pioneer ranchers would not find seasonal transhumance to be commercially cost-efficient. Moreover, because of the low carrying capacity of the pasture lands in the western portion of what is now Rocklin, a 160-acre tract could not maintain a sufficient number of animals to achieve efficiency of scale in stock-raising, even with the practice of seasonal transhumance. But larger landowners with substantial available cash could hire lower cost outside laborers. Thus, in the process of adapting established rural agricultural practices to this environment of seasonally meager natural resources, the earliest farmers and stockraisers encountered an inherent

pressure either to create large holdings, with a substantial investment in both livestock and land, or to sell their claims to newcomers who had the economic resources and the market-centered discipline to create such large holdings.

By the early 1870s it had become virtually impossible to earn a living from the smaller parcels of land within the region. Landowners such as the Whitneys began acquiring their neighbors' holdings, allowing larger herds to be maintained on the combined parcels.

The mixed economic strategy utilized by the early occupants of the arid landscape gradually became replaced by a single strategy: the large-scale production of cattle and sheep. Most early landowners disappeared from the records after the sale of their land.

The later apparent "success" of some of the ranchers of the region appears to be keyed to their ability to acquire large tracts of land for both summer and winter range. It must have been necessary to be "land poor" for some time, to become financially secure. Whitney began land poor in Placer County, but soon acquired a sizable wealth, perhaps due in part to the unified businesses and cooperative nature within the Whitney family, as well as the proximity of the ranch to the major transcontinental railroad line for shipping agricultural products to a wider market. J. P. Whitney's business acumen and diversified interests in other regions and states allowed him capital to invest in the acquisition of additional lands, to acquire water rights and develop water systems, to use the land in part for vineyards and orchards, and to experiment with different types of animals and crops, without risking his livelihood, unlike the smaller rancher or farmer in the same environment. Whitney perhaps provides the best example of the successful use of a marginal territory. Even so, water for agricultural use continued to be a problem. Ultimately, the major portion of the ranch remained in use for seasonal grazing.

Although the Spring Valley Ranch was subdivided, the former ranch lands remained in large tracts in the hands of a few families who continued to use the land for ranching. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, the increased urbanization and expansion of suburban communities from Sacramento to the northeast, along the Highway 80 corridor, led to growth of the housing market in the Rocklin community. Beginning in the 1980s, the lower cost of living and land have drawn high technology firms and other industries to the region, resulting in the subsequent commercial and residential development and expansion of the communities of Roseville, Rocklin, and Lincoln, virtually closing out the era of the large cattle ranches.

Until recent years, the lands of western Rocklin continued to be leased by the property owners to ranchers of the region for grazing their cattle in the winter and spring months. Local ranchers still take their cattle herds to summer range in the Sierra, thus demonstrating the long-term persistence of the traditional pattern of seasonal movement of livestock and herders to different grazing grounds as an environmental adaptation to a region of limited, seasonally fluctuating natural resources. Although now fully integrated into the wider market economy, these operations demonstrate the persistence of economic strategies that allowed the long-term survival of Euro-American settlers within a marginal environment.

Historic resources found in the area are representative of Rocklin's history. Resources that are typical to quarry areas include quarry pits, waste rock piles, derricks, derrick bases, derrick tie-

downs, various outbuilding and shed remnants, rock alignments, and granite fence posts (Rocklin Civic Center Plan L-6). Remnants of the Spring Valley Ranch can be found throughout the area. Some of these resources are rock fences, old buildings and foundations, and bridges.

### Historic Resources

The Rocklin Historical Society maintains a list of Historical Points of Interest in the City shown in Table 4-5. There are also four sites in the City of Rocklin that are currently listed in the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) (Office of Historic Preservation). More sites have been submitted for listing on the CHRIS but have not completed the review process. The listed sites are: The First Transcontinental Railroad (State Historic Landmark 780-2, SE corner of Rocklin & Front Street), California Granite Company Store (3980 Rocklin Road), Finnish Temperance Hall (4090 Rocklin Road), and 5400 Second Street. Figure 4-4 shows the location of historic points of interest in the City.

Unfortunately, many of the historic buildings in the City of Rocklin were destroyed in a number of fires, including one in 1914 that burned nearly all of 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

Table 4-5 Historic Points of Interest in the City of Rocklin		
Fig. 4-4 Ref	Name	Brief Description
1	Braday's Quarry	Established in 1861, it was the first granite quarry in Rocklin.
2	St. Mary's of the Assumption Catholic Church	Constructed 1882-1883, a corner stone from the old church now rests in front of the new church.
3	Joseph Barundoni Building	Constructed in 1905, a 2 story granite building that served as the Palace Meat Market. The only building on Front St. to survive the 1914 fire.
4	Rocklin Railroad Depot	Originally constructed in 1867, it included a saloon, ticket station and telegraph section. The rebuilt depot was demolished in 1940.
5	Rocklin City Hall	Constructed in 1912 as a company store, it was sold to the City in 1941.
6	Union Granite Company	Established in 1870, the quarry was in operation for 117 years. The shed was built in 1903.
7	Rocklin Cemetery	Established in 1864.
8	Old Finnish Picnic Grounds	Gathering place for Finnish habitants in early Rocklin.
9	Old Quinn Quarry	Established in 1873 on "squatted land".
10	Finnish Temperance Hall	Constructed in 1904 by the Finnish Temperance Society. Appears eligible for National Register.
11	Trott Hotel	Constructed in 1868, it burned for the second time in 1979. There is now a Lion's club plaque on the front sidewalk.

Table 4-5 Historic Points of Interest in the City of Rocklin		
Fig. 4-4 Ref	Name	Brief Description
12	Central Pacific Roundhouse	Constructed in 1866-67, it served as the Division Terminal until 1908 and was demolished in 1910.
13	The Wickman-Johnson Home	Home to Mr. Bolton who obtained the land in 1952.
14	Victorian Homes	Four homes constructed between 1890 and 1910.
15	Stained Glass Windows and Front Doors from Whitney Mansion	Constructed in 1885, the doors and windows of the mansion have been installed at the entrance of the Sunset Whitney Country Club.
16	Granite Stone Bridge	Constructed in 1900.
17	Rocklin Skating Rink (Pleasure Hall)	Finest ballroom between Sacramento and Reno in the early 1900s, it is now used for various commercial activities.
18	Aitken Ranch	Established in 1850, an iron trellis marks the entrance to this former olive orchard.
19	Racetrack	Established in 1893, it is now the site of the "Racetrack" housing development.
20	5400 Second Street	Built in 1930. Not eligible for National Register. Not yet evaluated for local listing.
21	Parker Whitney Mansion	Called the "Oaks," this 20 room mansion was built in 1884. A plaque acknowledging the mansion is located on Knoll Court.
22	Whitney Family Mausoleum	A pyramid shaped mausoleum, it is currently located next to the 11 <sup>th</sup> green of the Whitney Oaks Golf Course.

Source: Rocklin Historical Society, 2002

Appendix C presents a synopsis of the available information for recorded resources within the boundaries of the City of Rocklin. This is exclusive of historic sites that have not been formally recorded. Large portions of the City have been studied as part of the City’s environmental review processes in areas where new development has been proposed., Most of these surveys deal with more recent developments that have occurred primarily outside of the Central Rocklin area. As a result, there are heavy concentrations of more recent sites recorded in the northern, northwestern and southeastern sections of the City, but very few in the central area. For several of these project areas such as Stanford Ranch, Whitney Oaks, North West Rocklin, Sunset West, Granite Lakes Estates and Clover Valley Lakes, a management plan has been prepared for federal Section 106 review that guides the long-term treatment and management of the resources.

There is no reliable predictor of site location apparent from the site distribution. As one would expect, there are concentrations of prehistoric sites along reliable watercourses such as Pleasant Grove Creek and Clover Valley Creek, but there are many sites that are not located near main watercourses. Historic sites are even less constrained by the topography.

The bulk of the prehistoric sites have bedrock mortars (grinding holes) in association. Part of this is probably due to visibility. Bedrock mortars are much easier to find in tall grass than flake scatters. Part of the high incidence of mortars also results from increased population in this ecological zone, after the development of mortar and pestle technology made the oak park land zone a favored environment.

## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Fossil remains of prehistoric plant and animal life could be found in the sedimentary rocks and volcanic rock sedimentary materials that are present throughout Placer County. Sediments associated with the Mehrten Formation in the Roseville area have been found to contain fossils of terrestrial vertebrates. Fossilized animal remains also may be present in caves associated with the limestone geology that can be found in the central part of the Sierra Nevada foothills. No inventory or other information source exists that characterizes the extent, sensitivity, or significance of paleontological resources in Placer County.

## GRANITE AND GRAVEL EXTRACTION

Granite extraction is an important part of Rocklin's identity. Starting in the 1860s the granite business was a driving force behind early population growth in Rocklin. It has influenced the City's demographics, economy, and aesthetics.

Roy Ruhkala is a long standing member of the Rocklin community and the Rocklin Historical Society. His father, Matt Ruhkala, started working in the Rocklin granite business in 1889, and established the Union Granite Company in 1904. The Ruhkala family still runs the Ruhkala Granite & Marble Company, Inc. today. In 1975 Roy Ruhkala wrote a *History of Rocklin*. The following discussion of granite and gravel extraction is based on that account, information provided by Peak and Associates, and personal communication with Mr. Ruhkala.

The granite found in Rocklin is optimal because it is even-textured, very hard, available in large blocks and takes a high polish. It was used extensively in memorial and building work, and has been used in many important projects including the State Capitol, the United States Mint in San Francisco, Pearl Harbor and Mare Island Drydocks, the Sacramento River levee maintenance, several city halls, and city and county courthouses and jails. See the discussion above, the Gold Rush and Beyond, for additional history on the granite quarries.

One commercial business, Big Gun Quarry, extracts granite from Rocklin at this time. The granite that the Ruhkala business currently uses is imported from other areas of California, the U.S. and from all over the world.

Gravel was seldom commercially excavated in Rocklin due to the concern over the presence of mica. Mica weathers differentially and is sometimes detrimental to gravel aesthetics and durability.

## SOILS

The planning area is part of the Loomis Basin, situated in the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada Range. Soils in the planning area have resulted from stream erosion during the episodic uplifting of the Sierra Nevada Range combined with volcanic activity.

Soils within the planning area are generally of poor quality, and do not support commercial agricultural activities, with the exception of livestock grazing. In addition, several of the soil types found within the planning area pose severe obstacles to urban development, due to their stony and unconsolidated nature, posing difficulties to the construction of foundations, structures, roadways, and underground infrastructure.

The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) completed a soil survey of Western Placer County in 1980. The dominant soil types found within the City of Rocklin are:

**105 – Alamo Varian clay, 2-15% slopes.** This soil occurs at elevation of 100 to 200 feet. This is moderately deep, gently sloping, somewhat poorly drained clay on alluvial bottoms and rolling foot slopes in valleys between volcanic ridges. It has very slow permeability and slow to medium surface runoff with slight to moderate erosion hazard.

**106 – Andregg coarse sandy loam, 2-9% slopes.** This soil occurs at elevations of 200 to 1,000 feet. It is moderately deep, gently rolling, and well drained, underlain by weathered granitic bedrock. Permeability is moderately rapid and surface runoff is medium with a moderate erosion hazard.

**142 – Cometa –Ramona sandy loams, 1-5% slopes.** This soil occurs at 75 to 200 feet. It is about 50 percent Cometa soil on short side slopes and bottoms, and 30 percent Ramona soil on fingerlike ridges and younger land surfaces. The Cometa soil is deep and well drained, with very slow permeability and slow surface runoff. The Ramona soil is very deep and well drained with moderately slow permeability and medium runoff. The hazard of erosion is slight.

**144 – Exchequer very stony loam, 2-15% slopes.** This is a shallow, somewhat excessively drained very stony soil underlain by hard andesitic breccia and occurring at 100 to 2,000 feet. It has moderate permeability, medium surface runoff and a slight to moderate hazard of erosion.

**145 – Exchequer-Rock outcrop complex, 2-30% slopes.** Occurring at 100 to 1,000 feet, this soil is approximately 60 percent Exchequer soil and 15 percent andesitic breccia (lava cap). The Exchequer soil is shallow, somewhat excessively drained very stony soil with moderate permeability, medium to rapid surface runoff, and slight to high hazard of erosion. Rock outcrops consists of areas of hard andesitic breccia 50 to 500 square feet.

**147 – Fiddymment-Kaseberg loams, 2-9% slopes.** Undulating to gently rolling soils on low siltstone terraces at elevations of 75 to 135 feet. This soil is approximately 50 percent Fiddymment soil and 30 percent Kaseberg soil. The Fiddymment soil is moderately deep over a hardpan and is well

drained, moderately deep, with slow permeability, slow to medium surface runoff and a slight to moderate hazard of erosion. The Kaseberg soil is shallow over hardpan and is well drained with moderate permeability, slow to medium surface runoff and has a slight to moderate hazard of erosion.

**154 – Inks-Exchequer complex, 2-25% slopes.** Occurring at elevation of 200 to 1,200 feet, this soil is approximately 40 percent Inks soil and 30 percent Exchequer soil. The Inks soil is shallow, well drained cobbly soil that has moderate permeability, medium surface runoff and has a slight to moderate hazard of erosion.

The California Department of Conservation (CDC) integrates the USDA-NRCS Soil Surveys information and current land use information to determine Important Farmland designations. In 1982, the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) was established to assess the location, quality and quantity of agricultural lands. The inventory is updated every two years. FMMP also maps Interim Farmland for which no USDA-NRCS Soil Surveys are available. The CDC defines the Important Farmland designations as follows:

**Prime Farmland.** Farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long term production of agricultural crops. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. To be included, the applicable land must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

**Farmland of Statewide Importance.** Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

**Unique Farmland.** Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

**Farmland of Local Importance.** Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee. For Placer County this includes: lands zoned for agriculture by County Ordinance and the California Land Conservation Act as well as dry farmed lands, irrigated pasture lands, and other agricultural lands of significant economic importance to the county and include lands that have a potential for irrigation from Placer County water supplies.

Other FMMP coverage designations found in the Rocklin planning area are:

**Grazing land.** Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. The minimum mapping unit for Grazing Land is 40 acres.

**Urban and Built up land.** Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.

**Other land.** Land not included in any other mapping category.

**Water.** Perennial water bodies with an extent of at least 40 acres.

The Rocklin planning area is primarily designated as Urban/Built-up Land or Grazing Land with some areas of Farmland of Local Importance.

### Preservation of Open Space

Through its development, the City of Rocklin has placed high importance on the preservation of open space throughout the community. Some open space areas have been designated to retain unique natural features and characteristics. Others have been established to preclude development in areas with significant physical constraints.

Examples of natural features that have been incorporated into the many open space areas that traverse through the City include oak woodlands, wetlands, archaeological sites, water filled quarries, and numerous creeks including Secret Ravie Creek, Sucker Creek, Antelope Creek, Clover Valley Creek, Orchard Creek, and Pleasant Grove Creek. Areas with significant physical constraints that have been retained in their natural condition include locations within the 100-year floodplain and areas containing steep slopes.

Through its efforts, the City has been successful in retaining      acres of open space (    % of the 21 square mile Planning Area). This does not include the      acres occupied by both the Whitney Oaks and Sunset Whitney Golf Courses or all of the areas within private property where open space and conservation easements have been applied.

### PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The City owns 29 parks that consist of 366 acres of parkland that includes 155 +/- improved acres. The City currently has 24 full or partially developed parks (three community parks, 21 neighborhood parks) and five unimproved sites. An additional eight parks (one community park and seven neighborhood parks) totaling an estimated 75+/- acres are projected in future developments. At build-out it is projected that the City will operate 37 parks totaling an estimated 440 +/- acres. The Rocklin Unified School District operates nine elementary schools, two middle schools, and Rocklin High School. RUSD also provides additional recreational field space and open space within the City. Future school facilities projected include a second high school, a third middle school, and three/four new elementary schools. The attributes of the city parks are summarized in Table 4-6, and the locations of the parks, schools, and recreational facilities are shown on Figure 4-5.

The City of Rocklin Community Services & Facilities Department develops, maintains, and operates all City-owned park and recreation facilities. The City of Rocklin has a City Council-appointed Recreation Commission. The Commission serves as an advisory board to the City Council on matters including parkland acquisition, design and development, and recreation programs and activities. The City’s Community Services and Facilities Department is staffed by a director and administrative secretary and has two operational divisions: Recreation and Parks/Facilities. The Recreation Division is managed by a recreation superintendent and includes 34 full-time staff positions, numerous part-time staff, and contract instructors and volunteers. The Parks/Facilities Division is managed by the parks and facilities operations manager and includes 22 full-time staff positions, seasonal part-time workers, and small projects contracts.

The City has adopted standards for the location, design and use of City parks. These standards are related to the designation of the park as follows:

- Neighborhood park: 1-10 acres in size, serving a radius of up to ½ mile. Typical improvements may include but are not limited to preschool and school-aged playgrounds, (unlighted) open turf fields, pathways, basketball court, sand volleyball court, small covered picnic area, and open space areas.
- Community park: 10+ acres in size, 1- to 2 mile radius. Improvements may include but are not limited to lighted baseball, softball, soccer, and multi-use fields, community centers and other recreation buildings, large group picnic areas, pathways, preschool and school-aged playgrounds, off street parking, aquatics centers, restrooms, and other large or heavy-use recreation facilities. Community parks may also have large areas of undeveloped open space that may include oak tree groves and creeks.
- Special use park: No specific size or service area, but designed for single purpose recreational activities such as golf courses, nature centers, or display gardens.

Parks	Barbecues	Basketball Court	Baseball/Softball	Benches	Covered Group Picnic Area	Field	Horseshoe Pits	Pathways	Picnic Tables	Playground (School-aged)	Playground (Preschool-aged)	Restrooms	Roller Hockey Rink	Sand Volleyball	Skate Park	Tennis Courts
Breen Park	•			•		•		•	•	•	•					

Table 4-6 Rocklin City Parks Attributes																
Parks	Barbecues	Basketball Court	Baseball/Softball	Benches	Covered Group Picnic Area	Field	Horseshoe Pits	Pathways	Picnic Tables	Playground (School-aged)	Playground (Preschool-aged)	Restrooms	Roller Hockey Rink	Sand Volleyball	Skate Park	Tennis Courts
Boulder Ridge Park	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•					
Clarke Dominguez Park	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•						
Clover Valley Park	•			•				•	•	•						
Joe Hernandez Park	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•					
Johnson Springview Park	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Lone Tree Park			•			•		•				•				
Mansion Oaks Park				•		•		•	•	•	•					
Memorial Park	•			•			•		•		•	•				
Monte Verde Park	•			•		•			•		•					
Monument Park	•			•	•	•		•	•	•	•					
Night Ridge Park	•	•		•		•		•	•	•	•					
Old Timers Park									•							
Pebble Creek Park	•			•		•		•	•	•						
Pleasant Valley Creek	•	•		•		•		•	•	•	•					
Ruhkala Park	•	•		•		•		•	•	•	•			•		
Sasaki Park	•	•		•	•	•			•		•					
Sierra Meadows Park	•	•		•		•		•	•	•	•					
Sonora Park	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•					
Sunset East Park	•	•		•				•	•	•						
Twin Oaks Park			•	•		•		•	•	•		•				
Vista Grande Park	•	•		•		•		•	•	•						
Wesley Park	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•					
Woodside Park	•	•		•				•	•	•	•					

Source: Rocklin Community Services and Facilities Department, City of Rocklin, 2001

## PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY

The City's park inventory consists of the parks and facilities listed below:

NOTE – The acreage listed is total acreage which consists of improved and unimproved areas as well as open space.

### Community Parks

**Johnson-Springview Park** is located at 5480 5th Street and is comprised of 132 acres of developed recreational amenities, which consist of improved, unimproved, and oak studded open space. Amenities include: a 3-unit picnic pavilion with a total of six barbecues and seating for up to 330 people, three lighted tennis courts, basketball court, sand volleyball court, 18-hole disc golf course, multi-use field, two horseshoe pits, restrooms, children's playground, roller hockey rink, skate park, and a lighted baseball/softball complex adjacent to 3rd Street. The Rocklin Community Center, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Recreation Center, 5<sup>th</sup> Street Recreation Center, and the Rocklin Branch of the Placer County Library are also located in the park.

**Lone Tree Park** is located on West Oaks Boulevard and Lone Tree Boulevard. This 30-acre site includes improved and unimproved land and features lighted soccer, softball and baseball fields, and a restroom.

**Twin Oaks Park** is located at 5500 Park Drive. This 30-acre community park includes improved and unimproved land and features a lighted youth baseball and softball complex, restrooms, picnic tables, lighted multi-use field, playground and benches.

### Neighborhood Parks

**Breen Park** is located at Shelton Street and Swindon Road on 5.9 acres. Breen Park includes a preschool-aged playground and a school-aged playground, open turf field, picnic tables, benches, and pathways.

**Boulder Ridge Park** is an 11.6-acre park located on Park Drive. Amenities include two playgrounds, a small covered group picnic area, basketball court, horseshoe pits, and open turf.

**Clarke Dominguez Park** is located on an 8-acre site on Crest Drive. This park consists of a preschool aged playground, open turf field, picnic tables, benches, pathways, and a basketball court.

**Clover Valley Park** is located on Clover Valley Road and Midas Avenue. The 3.7-acre park features a historic granite bridge, a playground, picnic tables, barbecues, and benches.

**Joe Hernandez Park** is a 4-acre park located on Cornwall Way and Ballantree Way. Amenities include two playgrounds, a small covered group picnic area, basketball court and open turf field.

**Mansion Oaks Park** is located at Pebble Beach Drive and St. Andrews Drive. This 5.8-acre park is comprised of two playgrounds, an open turf field, picnic tables, benches, pathways, and a small historic granite bridge.

**Memorial Park.** This 1-acre park is located on Rocklin Road (next to the Rocklin City Hall). The park includes a playground, benches, barbecues, and a waterplay feature.

**Monte Verde Park** is located on El Don Drive. This two-acre park has a preschool-aged playground, picnic tables, barbecues, and benches.

**Monument Park** is located at Ketchikan Drive and Hood Road on a 7.2-acre site. This park includes two playgrounds, open turf field, a small covered group picnic area, benches, and pathways.

**Night Ridge Park.** This 4-acre park, located on Night Ridge Way, has barbecues, open turf field, picnic tables, two playgrounds, benches, and pathways.

**Old Timers Park** is located on Rocklin Road (between Front & Second Streets). It is a 0.1-acre park with picnic tables covered by beautiful canopy of shade trees.

**Pebble Creek Park** is located on Sandalwood Road and consists of 5 acres adjacent to Cobblestone Elementary School. It contains a playground, picnic tables, barbecues, and an open turf field.

**Pleasant Valley Creek Park** is a 9-acre park located along Pleasant Grove Boulevard and Whitney Oaks Drive. Improvements include two playgrounds, ½ basketball court, picnic tables, horseshoe pits, and benches.

**Ruhkala Park.** Located at Surfbird Lane and Arnold Drive, this 7-acre park consists of a large turf field, picnic tables, barbecues, pathways, basketball court, and a sand volleyball court.

**Sasaki Park.** This 2-acre park is located at Southside Ranch Road and features a half-basketball court, small open turf field, and a small covered group picnic area.

**Sierra Meadows** is a 4.8-acre park located on Sierra Meadows Drive. The park features a basketball court, multi-level playground, picnic tables, barbecue areas, and benches.

**Sonora Park** is an 8-acre park located along Sonora Pass Way. Amenities include two playgrounds, a small covered picnic area, a half basketball court, and open turf.

**Sunset East Park** is located on Willowynd Drive (off Springview Drive). It consists of two improved acres nestled in the trees with a half basketball court, playground, picnic tables, barbecues, and pathways.

**Vista Grande Park** is located on Onyx Drive on 4.5 acres with a half basketball court, multi-level playground, picnic tables, barbecues, benches, and small open turf field.

Wesley Park is located at Wesley Road and Denton Court on a 7.8-acre site consisting of two playgrounds, a basketball court, an open turf field, picnic tables, benches, pathways, and a small covered group picnic area.

Woodside Park is located on Westwood Drive. It is a 5-acre park with a basketball court, two playgrounds, picnic tables, and barbecues.

### Future Parks

Margaret Azevedo Community Park – A 24-acre park to be located along Sioux Street

Quarry Ridge Park – A 4-acre park to be located near Greenbrae Road.

West Oaks Park – A 17-acre park to be located on West Oaks Boulevard adjacent to Pleasant Grove Creek. Most of this site is in a wetland area.

Clover Valley Lakes – Two 5-acre parks to be located within this development.

Sunset Ranchos – A 40-acre community park and five 3- to 5-acre parks to be located within this development.

Gayaldo Neighborhood Park – A 4-acre park to be located in this subdivision.

### Recreational Facilities

Rocklin Community Center. The Community Center is located at 5480 5th Street, in Johnson-Springview Park. The center includes a main room that can accommodate 178 seated and 381 standing. It also has a smaller meeting room, and a convenience kitchen. Adjacent to the Community Center is the picnic pavilion that can accommodate groups as large as 330 people. (Available to rent.)

Finnish Temperance Hall. The Finnish Temperance Hall (Finn Hall) is located at 4090 Rocklin Road. The main room can accommodate 144 seated and 309 standing and is equipped with a convenience kitchen. The hall also has a stage where City-sponsored theatrical productions are held. (Available to rent.)

Rocklin Sunset Center is located at 2650 Sunset Boulevard near Fairway Drive. The main hall of the Sunset Center can accommodate 320 banquet, 512 auditorium, or 775 standing. Classes are held in the Main Hall, Sunset Room, and various classrooms. Community Services Recreation staff offices are located down the west corridor. This facility also includes a conference room, a stage, and a convenience kitchen. (Available to rent.)

3<sup>rd</sup> Street Recreation Center. Located at 5530 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, this recreation center houses Rocklin Preschool and other recreation classes.

5<sup>th</sup> Street Recreation Center. Located at 5484 5<sup>th</sup> Street, this recreation center houses Rocklin Preschool and other recreation programs.

**Aquatics Complex.** The Aquatics Complex is located at 5301 Victory Lane at the Rocklin High School. City sponsored programs are offered in the late spring, throughout the summer, and in the fall.

**Clarke Dominguez Gymnasium.** Located at 5035 Meyers Street at the Rocklin Elementary School. This gymnasium will be used on school days by the students for physical education programs and other activities. The City of Rocklin will utilize the gym during evenings, weekends, and throughout the summer for physical recreation programs and youth and adult sports. The construction of this facility was completed as a cooperative effort between the City and School District.

**Whitney High School Pool.** This facility is a recreational and competitive pool measuring 25 yards wide by 40 yards long. It will be used by the City and the School District pursuant to a joint use agreement.

Privately owned recreational facilities in the City include California Family Fitness Center, Rocklin Bowl, and the Sunset Whitney and Whitney Oaks golf courses and clubs. These facilities provide additional open space and recreational opportunities within the City.

### Park and Recreational Fees and Standards

The City has adopted park and recreation facilities improvement fees to finance parks and city-wide recreational facilities improvements to reduce the impacts of increased use on existing facilities. New developments are required to either dedicate parkland or pay park development fees based on a General Plan standard of 5.0 acres per 1000 residents. In addition, the City has negotiated “turnkey” provisions whereby developers construct parks and install recreational equipment within parks as part of development projects. This allows developers to market their projects with a known time frame as to when new residents can expect completion of parks within their neighborhoods.

With a 2003 population of 43,600 people, and 362 acres of parks (150 improved acres), Rocklin has 8.3 acres of parks (3.44 improved acres) per 1,000 people. With the additional acreage of planned future parks, Rocklin’s population could increase to approximately 75,000 and still provide more than five acres of parks per 1,000 residents. Park improvement fees are used to acquire parkland within the City.

### OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION AND RECREATION ELEMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

**GOAL FOR THE PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE LAND FOR NATURAL RESOURCES:** To designate, protect, and conserve open space land in a manner that protects natural resources and balances needs for the economic, physical and social development of the City.

## Policies for the Preservation of Open Space for Natural Resources

- OCR-1 To encourage the protection of open space areas, natural resource areas, hilltops, and hillsides from encroachment or destruction through the use of conservation easements, natural resource buffers, building setbacks or other measures.
- OCR-2 To recognize that balancing the need for economic, physical, and social development of the City may lead to some modification of existing open space and natural resource areas during the development process.
- OCR-3 To require that residential development projects provide some useable yard areas outside all conservation easements or established natural resource buffers.
- OCR-4 To utilize the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as the primary regulatory tool for identifying and mitigating, where feasible, impacts to open space and natural resources when reviewing proposed development projects.
- OCR-5 To look for opportunities to interconnect open space and natural areas to accommodate wildlife movement and sustain ecosystems and biodiversity.
- OCR-6 To consult with other jurisdictions concerning open space planning programs, including the County's Placer Legacy program and other similar regional programs, to the extent feasible.
- OCR-7 To encourage public utility companies and agencies to consult with the City prior to undertaking projects that may affect open space and natural resource areas to minimize impacts to these areas.

**GOAL FOR OPEN SPACE USED FOR THE MANAGED PRODUCTION OF RESOURCES:** To designate, protect, and conserve open space utilized for the managed production of resources while maintaining compatibility with neighboring uses and other open space preservation goals.

## Policies for Open Space Used for the Managed Production of Resources

- OCR-8 To consider allowing mineral extraction, in accordance with the use permit process and Rocklin Municipal Code Chapter 17.65, Surface Mining and Reclamation, on land suitable for such activities until such time as development occurs, as long as such activities are compatible with an urban environment.
- OCR-9 To permit the continued use of open space land for established agricultural activities until such time as development occurs, as long as such activities are compatible within an urban environment.
- OCR-10 To protect the groundwater recharge value of riparian and wetland areas while recognizing that minor modifications to such areas may be a necessary outcome of the development process.

**GOAL FOR OPEN SPACE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION:** Provide sufficient improved and unimproved outdoor recreation sites to meet the needs of the City on a continuing basis and at residential buildout.

**Policies for Open Space for Outdoor Recreation**

- OCR-11 To provide for park and other outdoor recreational needs, both active and passive, through methods including but not limited to: collection of park user fees, dedication of parkland, or a combination of both; rehabilitation of existing park and recreation facilities; requiring the installation of park improvements; and requiring that financial mechanisms be created for long-term park and/or open space operation and maintenance.
- OCR-12 To require dedication of parkland, payment of in lieu fees for parkland, or a combination of both, as a condition of approval in the early stages of the development process, including approval of rezonings, where it is necessary to insure consistency with or implementation of the goals and policies contained in this General Plan.
- OCR-13 To provide developed as well as undeveloped parkland, recognizing that certain unique open space attributes may be best preserved by retaining them in a natural condition.
- OCR-14 To look for opportunities to establish linear parklands and/or open space areas that link open space and outdoor recreation areas, providing passage for pedestrians, bicycles, and wildlife.
- OCR-15 To encourage the location of parks adjacent to open space corridors.
- OCR-16 To encourage developers to dedicate and build parks that are integral to new development in turnkey fashion or other appropriate manner wherever feasible.
- OCR-17 To provide park facilities in a timely manner.
- OCR-18 To utilize locational and size guidelines that will allow the City to maintain a minimum of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.
- OCR-19 To co-locate parks with schools whenever feasible, through joint use and development agreements.
- OCR-20 To co-locate parks within or adjacent to storm water detention basins, whenever feasible.
- OCR-21 To require new development to mitigate its impact on park development and maintenance.

- OCR-22 To seek outside funding from local, State and Federal agencies, as well as the private sector, for new park development and rehabilitation of existing park facilities.
- OCR-23 To consider acquisition and development of small areas along creeks at convenient and safe locations for use by the general public.
- OCR-24 To protect designated outdoor recreation sites from incompatible urban development.
- OCR-25 To maintain a Park Repair and Development Fund that receives revenues from a variety of sources.
- OCR-26 To establish Class I bikeways where feasible along public roadways when roadways are adjacent to open space and parkland.
- OCR-27 To integrate, to the extent practical, the City's bike and trails network with trails in adjacent jurisdictions and the region.
- OCR-28 To encourage participation by community volunteers in park development, repair and maintenance.

**GOAL FOR RECREATION PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES:** Provide opportunities for organized recreational activities and programs.

**Policies for Recreation Programs and Facilities**

- OCR-29 To provide recreation programs that meet resident needs.
- OCR-30 To provide recreation programs that foster financially self-supporting recreational facilities.
- OCR-31 To support and cooperate with Rocklin-based volunteer groups and organizations that provide recreation activities to all citizens, particularly young people and senior citizens.
- OCR-32 To provide active recreation facilities and related infrastructure within community parks, such as lighted athletic fields, soccer fields, softball diamonds and parking areas.
- OCR-33 To provide recreation facilities for neighborhood residential areas in neighborhood parks that include informal turf areas, playgrounds, and passive recreation opportunities.
- OCR-34 To seek funding sources for a variety of recreational programs and facilities,

including program fees, lease agreements and concessions, State and Federal funds, and the City Americans with Disabilities Act Superfund.

- OCR-35 To participate on a regional level (with other local jurisdictions) in hosting sports tournaments and recreational events that promote tourism, whenever feasible.
- OCR-36 To encourage joint use of City and school facilities for recreational programs.
- OCR-37 To provide additional active recreational opportunities such as community centers, a performing arts center, swimming pools and gymnasiums.

**GOAL FOR THE CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES:**  
Conserve and protect natural resources while permitting their managed use, consistent with City, State and Federal requirements.

**Policies for the Conservation, Development and Utilization of Natural Resources**

- OCR-38 To encourage the protection of wetlands, vernal pools, and rare, threatened and endangered species of both plants and animals through either avoidance of these resources, or implementation of appropriate mitigation measures where avoidance is not feasible, as determined by the City of Rocklin.
- OCR-39 To require compliance with the State and Federal Endangered Species Acts and the Clean Water Act as conditions of development project approval.
- OCR-40 To recognize that onsite protection of natural resources may not always be feasible and that offsite methods, such as use of mitigation banks, may be used.
- OCR-41 To encourage projects to be designed in a manner that protects heritage oak trees and other botanically unique vegetation designated to be retained.
- OCR-42 To mitigate for removal of oak trees in accordance with the City of Rocklin's Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance.
- OCR-43 To encourage development projects to incorporate natural resources such as creeks, steep hillsides, and quarries in private but restricted ownership that provides for the protection of the natural resource and also allows for access by the public, where appropriate.
- OCR-44 To cooperate in a coordinated regional approach to the management of drainage basins and flood plains with regional agencies such as the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.
- OCR-45 To protect designated 100-year floodplains from encroachment by development that would impede flood flows or pose a hazard to occupants.

- OCR-46 To promote, where appropriate, the joint use of creeks for flood control, open space, conservation of natural resources, and limited recreation activities.
- OCR-47 To minimize the degradation of water quality through use of erosion control plans and Best Management Practices.
- OCR-48 To maintain a grading ordinance that minimizes erosion and siltation of creeks and other watercourses.
- OCR-49 To prohibit development along stream channels that would significantly reduce stream capacity, increase erosion or cause deterioration of the channel.
- OCR-50 To coordinate with other agencies to develop public education programs that will encourage residents to minimize pollutants and sediments reaching receiving waters.
- OCR-51 To encourage measures promoting proper disposal of pollutants to the sanitary sewer or hazardous waste facilities rather than to the storm drainage system.
- OCR-52 To establish and coordinate operations and maintenance procedures for all City departments to assure that water quality objectives are not threatened by City operations and to serve as an example for the community.
- OCR-53 To consider the visual qualities of development projects and project compatibility with surrounding areas, especially when projects are proposed in urbanizing areas abutting rural or semi-rural areas where significant natural resource values exist.
- OCR-54 To encourage energy conservation in new developments.
- OCR-55 To encourage urban design and form that conserves land and other resources.
- OCR-56 To require development projects to incorporate Best Management Practices for protection of air quality during construction and subsequent operations.
- OCR-57 To coordinate and cooperate with the Placer County Air Pollution Control District in the development of stationary and mobile source control measures affecting the City of Rocklin.
- OCR-58 To work with the Placer County Water Agency to ensure that available methods and techniques to conserve potable water supplies are applied in Rocklin.
- OCR-59 To encourage the use of reclaimed wastewater for landscaping and other similar applications, when a feasible source of reclaimed wastewater exists.

**GOAL FOR THE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF HISTORIC, GEOLOGIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES:** Conserve and protect unique community features such as geologic, historic and culturally significant sites.

## Policies for the Conservation and Protection of Historic, Geologic and Cultural Resources

- OCR-60 To encourage the protection and preservation of historically significant and geologically unique areas.
- OCR-61 To encourage preservation and incorporation of existing rock quarries and major rock outcroppings in future development projects.
- OCR-62 To encourage reuse rather than demolition/replacement of historic structures where feasible.
- OCR-63 To preserve archaeologically significant resources in place if feasible, or provide mitigation that fully documents the resource prior to further disturbance.

## OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION AND RECREATION ACTION PLAN

Please refer to Chapter II, Summary of Goals and Policies and Action Plan, for the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Action Plan.

## PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES STANDARDS

### Definitions

This Element establishes the following definitions for park facilities in the City of Rocklin:

**Mini-Park.** A park of 1 acre or less, serving a radius within 1/4 mile. It is a specialized facility that serves a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens.

**Neighborhood Park.** A park of 1 to 10 acres, serving a 1/4 to 1/2 mile radius. It is an area for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus, skating, picnicking and wading pools.

**Community Park.** A park of 10+ acres, serving a 1 to 2 mile radius. It is an area of diverse environmental quality. It may include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes and large swimming pools. It may be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, and picnicking. It may be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community need.

**Special Use Park.** No specific size or service area. It includes areas for specialized or single-purpose recreational activities, such as golf courses, nature centers, zoos, conservatories, arboreta, display gardens, arenas, outdoor theaters, gun ranges, or areas that preserve, maintain, and interpret buildings, sites, and objects of archaeological, historical or cultural significance. Special use parks can also be located in plazas or squares in or near commercial centers, boulevards, or parkways.

Conservancy. No specific size or service area. It provides for protection and management of the natural/cultural environment with recreation use as a secondary objective.

### Park Location Guidelines

The following are guidelines for selection of potential new park sites. Each site will have its own merits; however, application of these guidelines will assist in the determination of the suitability of a potential site for park use.

- The site should help preserve valuable natural and historical features, such as evidence of past mining activities, historic structures or buildings, oak woodlands, creeks and riparian areas, hilltops and natural areas.
- The site should be easily accessible.
- The site should allow multi-purpose use.
- Where possible, neighborhood parks should be located adjacent to elementary schools, other public open space, or public facilities.